PREFACE

The power and influence that a country of the size and population of Britain had come to enjoy in modern history are without parallels. Though Britain was still a global power to be reckoned with at the end of the Second World War, her capability to play a world role was considerably reduced. In spite of such a weakening of capabilities, Britain continued to sustain as many interests and commitments as possible, during the first two post-War decades, across the world. These commitments arose either out of her colonial interest or out of the peculiar security conditions that emerged at the end of the War. This was not something that could have been continued without its adverse impact on the national economy. It, in fact, created a situation of over-stretch for Britain.

The only possible way out was by attempting to reconcile commitments with capability. This was sought to be accomplished through the Defence Review announced in January 1968. Through this Review, Britain tried to realistically relocate herself in the post-War world order, without compromising on any fundamental British interest. Among these were the preservation of her territorial, economic and strategic interests in various parts of the world, prevention of another global war, particularly a European one, preservation of global peace and containing the Communist expansionism.

All these were achieved for a convincingly long period by relying on the remarkable qualitative improvements in the defence-related technologies – reinforced by her formidable independent nuclear capabilities, on the strength of the North Atlantic Alliance and on the exceptionally close ties she maintained with the United States. These three elements, therefore, are central to the post-War Britain’s defence policy. These were reaffirmed by the Defence Reviews of 1968 and again of 1974. The focus of the present study is on Britain’s Defence Policy during 1968-1986 period laying special emphasis on the three principal elements – the Nuclear Deterrent, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Special Relationship – as factors in Britain’s Defence policy.

Chapter I has explored the principles and considerations that prevailed on Britain in shaping her post-War defence policy, upto 1968, and how she went about realizing them. Chapter II is an attempt to analyze the new direction to the policy sought to be given by the Defence Review of 1968. Chapters III, IV and V seek to study the three main pillars of post-
War defence policy and Chapter VI attempts to see what is left of the globalist content in Britain's defence policy.

Enquiring into how Britain, reduced in capabilities to play a dominant world role, in the backdrop of a completely new international order that emerged since the end of the War, adjusted herself to the new realities has been a fascinating endeavour. My interest in the subject arose primarily out of the exposure I got to the foreign and defence policies of the leading West-European powers as part of my Post-Graduate programme at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), during 1982-84. Britain's remarkable role in winning the War and the way she went about constructing defences against Communist expansionism attracted my interest and, as such I chose this as the focus area for an M.Phil programme at JNU, during 1984-86.

The present study is a natural extension of that interest kindled more than two decades back and nurtured for so long by my distinguished Professor B.Vivekanandan whom I had the privilege of having as my supervisor. I have benefited immensely from his learning and understanding of the different aspects of contemporary international relations particularly of the dynamics of European foreign and defence policies. His constant encouragement and his uncompromising commitment to excellence were the driving forces for me all through my work. For him students' work always took precedence over everything else. I am deeply beholden to him for guiding me through every stage of this thesis with patience and perseverance. However, I am singularly responsible for the shortcomings, if any, in this thesis.

The road to this thesis has been an unusually long one. During its course, I have benefited from the learning, good will, encouragement and support of several individuals and institutions. The Research Fellowship I received from the University Grants Commission saw me through the early stages of my research. Of particular importance was the grant I received from the Charles Wallace India Trust, London, which met the in-UK cost of my research in London in the summer of 2003. A special word of thanks is due to its Secretary Dr. Frank Taylor. The travel grant I received from the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) for my visit to London is acknowledged with gratitude.

Equally important was the cooperation and support I received from the staff of the Libraries of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; London School of Economics and
Political Science (LSEPS); the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), Chatham House, London, particularly its Librarian Mrs. Mary Bone; the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Arundale House, London; the Public Record Office (PRO), now renamed the National Archives, at Kew, London; the British High Commission and the British Council in New Delhi; the Indian Council of World Affairs, Sapru House, New Delhi; and the Parliament Library, New Delhi. I express my gratitude to all of them.

The opportunity I had in meeting a few prominent personalities associated with the defence policy making in London, was of immense importance for my work. Of special significance was the interviews with Lord Denis Healey, the British Secretary of State for Defence (1964-1970) and later the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1974-1979); Sir Arthur Hockaday, Permanent Under Secretary, Ministry of Defence (MOD) in the 1970s and later the Deputy Secretary-General, NATO; Sir Michael Quinlan Permanent Under Secretary, MOD, in the 1980s; Mr. Chris Wright, an MOD Officer, currently heading the New Security Issues Programme at the RIIA; Col. Christopher Langton, Head, Defence Analysis Department, IISS, and Editor, *The Military Balance*; and Prof. Kenneth G. Young of the University of London. Dr. Rajiv Narayan helped me in many ways in making the best use of my time in London. The lead given by Prof. Nirmala Marti of the University of London was also very helpful. So was Huyn-bang Shin’s assistance at the LSEPS. I am indebted to all of them in great measure.

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